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**From:** Kelly Cook [kelly.cook@tceq.texas.gov]  
**Sent:** 12/10/2019 3:33:23 PM  
**To:** Beth Seaton [Beth.Seaton@tceq.texas.gov]; Carroll, Craig [Carroll.Craig@epa.gov]; Smalley, Bryant [smalley.bryant@epa.gov]; Adams, Adam [Adams.Adam@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** TPC Update 12: Fire / R10 / TPC Port Neches Operations / Port Neches, Jefferson County - Notification of Significant Incident/Notification Report to State Legislators

FYI

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**From:** Jonathan Walling <jonathan.walling@tceq.texas.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 9, 2019 8:37 PM  
**To:** HSNotify <HSNotify@tceq.texas.gov>; IGR <IGR@tceq.texas.gov>  
**Subject:** Update 12: Fire / R10 / TPC Port Neches Operations / Port Neches, Jefferson County - Notification of Significant Incident/Notification Report to State Legislators

**Update 12:**

On December 9, 2019, two small fires discovered in the reactor area on December 6, 2019 continue to burn. TPC has determined there is no visible level of material [crude butadiene (56%)] remaining in the reactors. The material is under pressure and a decision was made to let the material burn-out. The area is being monitored by drone footage. Air monitoring is continuing in the community and no levels have exceeded the action level for 1,3-butadiene (0.5 ppm). On December 9, 2019, CTEH (TPC contractor) conducted air monitoring at the schools in the area and found no levels of concern. CTEH will continue monitoring at the local schools.

TPC has identified twelve tanks that were impacted by the fire. Plans are underway to safely transfer all remaining materials from the site, after conducting mechanical integrity inspections of tanks. All tanks containing materials are being evaluated and prioritized for product transfer. TPC started injecting an oxygen scavenger inhibitor called DEHA (Diethylhydroxylamine) into the impacted tanks to stabilize the butadiene. Approximately 20 gallons of the inhibitor will be injected into each tank. It is estimated that it will take a minimum of 110 hours to complete the injection of the inhibitor into the twelve impacted tanks. Options to safely transport materials from the site are being assessed.

Firefighting water continues to be applied to keep equipment cool. TPC continues to have personnel stationed at Outfall 201 to document and report overflow and sheening to Incident Command and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). No wastewater has overflowed since December 7, 2019. Pre-Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique evaluations were conducted today, December 9, 2019. No major impacts have been documented to date.

TPC contractors (CTEH) continue conducting asbestos swipe sampling upon request by complainants. Asbestos complaints that the TCEQ receives will continue to be forwarded to TPC for further investigation. Asbestos debris removal will continue on December 10, 2019. Asbestos air monitoring continues in Jefferson County and Orange County. Sample results continue to show no asbestos. In addition, all of the swipe tests conducted in the community have shown no signs of asbestos fibers. Sampling will continue in the area.

On December 9, 2019, the Huntsman Port Neches facility adjacent to TPC notified the Beaumont regional office that they plan to conduct maintenance turn-around on the PO/MTBE unit (originally scheduled for January 2020) starting December 10, 2019. This facility has been down since the TPC explosion and they do not know when they will be able to resume operations; therefore, they plan on conducting maintenance on the unit while the site is not in operation. There will be flaring at both the elevated and ground flares located during this maintenance activity. The facility has notified the Unified Command and the local officials. In addition, they have provided notice on the STAN network to inform the public of this activity. The region is ensuring that Judge Branick is aware of the activity.

The region continues to staff the EOC and provide air monitoring and water quality monitoring/assessment teams. Staff from TCEQ regional offices in Houston and Corpus Christi have been assisting with air monitoring. The EPA plans to demobilize the ASPECT aircraft on December 10, 2019.

#### **Update 11:**

On December 8, 2019, two small fires discovered in the reactor area on December 6, 2019 continue to burn. TPC has determined there is no visible level of material [crude butadiene (56%)] remaining in the reactors. The material is under pressure, and a decision was made to let the material burn out. The area is being monitored by drone footage. Air monitoring is continuing in the community and no levels have exceeded the action level for 1,3-butadiene (0.5 ppm).

TPC has identified twelve tanks that were impacted by the fire. Plans are underway to safely transfer all remaining materials from the site, after conducting mechanical integrity inspections of tanks. All tanks containing materials are being evaluated and prioritized for product transfer. To further secure and safely transfer remaining materials from the site, technical experts with TPC plan to introduce inhibitors to stabilize materials being transferred. They hope to start addition of the inhibitors this week. Options to safely transport materials from the site are being assessed.

Firefighting water continues to be applied to keep equipment cool. TPC continues to have personnel stationed at Outfall 201 to document and report overflow and sheening to Incident Command and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). No wastewater has overflowed since December 7, 2019. Pre-Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique evaluations were conducted today, December 8, 2019. No major impacts have been documented to date.

TPC contractors (CTEH) continue conducting asbestos swipe sampling upon request by complainants. Asbestos complaints that the TCEQ receives will continue to be forwarded to TPC for further investigation. Asbestos debris removal will continue on December 9, 2019. Asbestos air monitoring continues in Jefferson County and Orange County. Sample results continue to show no asbestos. In addition, all of the swipe tests conducted in the community have shown no signs of asbestos fibers. Sampling will continue in the area.

On December 8, 2019, a meeting was held at the EOC to provide information and answer questions from the Port Neches Groves ISD and the City of Port Neches officials. Jefferson County Judge Branick participated in the meeting along with EPA, TCEQ, TPC, ATSDR, CTEH, and the Public Health Department. A status update was given and there was a discussion of the air monitoring conducted in the area. On December 8, 2019, CTEH (TPC contractor) conducted air monitoring at the schools in the area and found no levels of concern. CTEH will continue monitoring at the local schools. A decision was made to have a liaison dedicated to communication with the Port Neches Groves ISD. After the meeting, a decision was made to resume school on December 9, 2019.

The region continues to staff the EOC and provide air monitoring and water quality monitoring/assessment teams. Staff from TCEQ regional offices in Houston and Corpus Christi have been assisting with air monitoring.

#### **Update 10:**

On December 7, 2019, two small fires discovered in the reactor area on December 6, 2019 continue to burn. TPC has determined there is no visible level of material [crude butadiene (56%)] remain in the reactors. The material is under pressure, and a decision was made to let the material burn out. The area is being monitored by drone footage. Air monitoring is continuing in the community and no levels have exceeded the action level for 1,3-butadiene (0.5 ppm).

TPC has identified 12 tanks that were impacted by the fire. Plans are underway to safely transfer all remaining materials from the site, after conducting mechanical integrity inspections of tanks. All tanks containing materials are being evaluated and prioritized for product transfer. To further secure and safely transfer remaining materials from the site, technical experts with TPC plan to introduce inhibitors to stabilize materials being transferred. Options to safely transport materials from the site are being assessed.

Firefighting water continues to be applied to keep equipment cool. TPC continues to have personnel stationed at Outfall 201 to document and report overflow and sheening to Incident Command and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). TPC added additional pumps and on December 7, 2019, the wastewater was not overflowing Outfall 201. A vacuum truck has been staged in the area to assist with preventing additional overflow. Pre-Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique evaluations were conducted today, December 7, 2019. No major impacts have been documented to date.

TPC contractors (CTEH) continue conducting asbestos swipe sampling upon request by complainants. Asbestos complaints that the TCEQ receives will continue to be forwarded to TPC for further investigation. Asbestos debris removal will continue on December 8, 2019. Asbestos air monitoring continues in Jefferson County and Orange County. Sample results continue to show no asbestos. In addition, all of the swipe tests conducted in the community have shown no signs of asbestos fibers. Sampling will continue in the area.

The region continues to staff the EOC and provide air monitoring and water quality monitoring/assessment teams. Staff from TCEQ regional offices in Houston and Corpus Christi have been assisting with air monitoring.

#### **Update 9:**

On December 6, 2019, two small fires were discovered in the reactor area. TPC used an OGIC camera to determine that there was approximately 2.5 feet of material remaining in the reactors [crude butadiene (56%)]. The material is under pressure and a decision was made to let the material burn out. At noon, it was estimated that the material would burn for another 14 hours. The area is being monitored by drone footage. Air monitoring is continuing in the community and no levels have exceeded the action level for 1,3-butadiene (0.5 ppm).

Firefighting water continues to be applied to keep equipment cool. TPC has personnel stationed at Outfall 201 to document and report overflow and sheening to Incident Command and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). On December 6, 2019, wastewater was continuing to overflow Outfall 201. The overflow is due to application of water to keep equipment cool. TPC is working to stop the overflow by adding additional pumps. Pre-Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) evaluations were conducted today, December 6, 2019. No major impacts have been documented to date.

TPC contractors (CTEH) continue conducting asbestos swipe sampling upon request by complainants. Asbestos complaints that the TCEQ receives will continue to be forwarded to TPC for further investigation. Asbestos debris removal will continue on December 7, 2019. Asbestos air monitoring continues in Jefferson County and Orange County. Sample results continue to show no asbestos. In addition, all of the swipe tests conducted in the community have shown no signs of asbestos fibers. Sampling will continue in the area.

The region continues to staff the EOC and provide air monitoring and water quality monitoring/assessment teams. Staff from TCEQ regional offices in Houston and Corpus Christi have been assisting with air monitoring.

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**From:** Jonathan Walling

**Sent:** Thursday, December 5, 2019 8:46 PM

**To:** HSNotify <[HSNotify@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:HSNotify@tceq.texas.gov)>; IGR <[IGR@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:IGR@tceq.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** Update 8: Fire / R10 / TPC Port Neches Operations / Port Neches, Jefferson County - Notification of Significant Incident/Notification Report to State Legislators

#### **Update 8:**

On December 4, 2019, at 10:00 p.m., the City of Port Neches and Jefferson County Judge Branick issued a voluntary evacuation for all residents in the City of Port Neches due to elevated levels of 1,3-butadiene in some portions of the city. Air monitoring was conducted throughout the community during the night to assess the situation. Over 200 readings were over the action level for 1,3-butadiene (0.5 ppm). Spherical Tank 25 (containing crude butadiene feedstock) had a leaking relief valve (RV) which was causing the elevated levels in the community. On December 5, 2019, TPC was able to isolate the leaking RV which stopped the leak from the tank. Air monitoring immediately showed a significant reduction of butadiene levels. Since this was accomplished, the highest level of 1,3-butadiene in the community was 0.23 ppm. On December 5, 2019, the voluntary evacuation order was lifted at 12:29 p.m. Air monitoring is continuing in the community.

TPC has personnel stationed at Outfall 201 to document and report overflow and sheening to Incident Command and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). On December 5, 2019, wastewater was continuing to overflow Outfall 201. The overflow is due to additional firewater being used on Tank 25, and the application of water to keep equipment cool. TPC is working to stop the overflow by adding additional pumps. Pre-Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) evaluations were conducted today, December 5, 2019. No major impacts have been documented to date.

TPC contractors (CTEH) began conducting asbestos swipe sampling upon request by complainants. Asbestos complaints that the TCEQ receives will continue to be forwarded to TPC for further investigation. Asbestos debris removal will continue on December 6, 2019. Asbestos air monitoring continues in Jefferson and Orange County. Sample results continue to show no asbestos. In addition, all of the swipe tests conducted in the community have shown no signs of asbestos fibers. Sampling will continue in the area.

The region continues to staff the EOC and provide air monitoring and water quality monitoring/assessment teams. Staff from TCEQ regional offices in Houston and Corpus Christi have been assisting with air monitoring and SCAT operations.

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**From:** Jonathan Walling <[jonathan.walling@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:jonathan.walling@tceq.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, December 4, 2019 11:09 PM

**To:** HSNotify <[HSNotify@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:HSNotify@tceq.texas.gov)>; IGR <[IGR@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:IGR@tceq.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** Update 7: Fire / R10 / TPC Port Neches Operations / Port Neches, Jefferson County - Notification of Significant Incident/N The region continues to staff the Incident Command/Emergency Operation Center, provide air monitoring and water quality monitoring/assessment teams. Staff from TCEQ regional offices in Houston and Corpus Christi, as well as staff from the TCEQ's Critical Infrastructure Division's Disaster Response Strike Team members have been assisting with air monitoring, Incident Command staffing, and SCAT operations.

Notification Report to State Legislators

**Update 7:**

On December 4, 2019, at approximately 5 pm, CTEH (TPC's contractor) monitored a sustained (at least 20 minutes) reading of 1.5 ppm 1,3-Butadiene in the neighborhood adjacent to the TPC facility at Gist and Saba Lane.

As a precaution, based on current wind conditions and on-going activities at the TPC site, Port Neches Fire Chief (Paul Nelson) issued a shelter-in-place for the City of Port Neches until 6 am on December 5, 2019. The situation will be monitored throughout the night and reevaluated at 5 am to determine what steps will be needed at that time.

Assistant Superintendent, Julie Gauthier, has stated that the Port Neches Independent School District has cancelled schools for the remainder of the week. In addition, all athletic events have been canceled. Ms.

Gauthier stated that the cancelation will allow the current shelter-in-place to come to an end, and provide the district adequate time to retest the air quality in the schools before students and staff return.

The City of Port Neches and Jefferson County Judge Branick have issued a voluntary evacuation for all residents in the City of Port Neches due to elevated levels of 1,3-Butadiene. These elevated levels have been measured in some portions of the city. There is an expected shift in wind direction overnight, and high humidity will keep the vapors near the ground. The current levels being measured do not pose a serious health risk, but may cause dizziness, nausea, headaches, irritated eyes and throat. People experiencing any of these symptoms are encouraged to leave their location. Any of these symptoms experienced are reversible and will not have long term effects.

The current levels are not expected to pose a flammability or explosion risk.

The highest current and anticipated measurements have been identified from Saba Lane to Nall Street and north to Port Neches Avenue.

A temporary shelter for those needing a place to shelter has been established at Ford Park Arena, 5115 Interstate 10 S, Beaumont, TX 77705.

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**From:** Jonathan Walling <[jonathan.walling@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:jonathan.walling@tceq.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, December 4, 2019 4:00 PM

**To:** HSNotify <[HSNotify@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:HSNotify@tceq.texas.gov)>; IGR <[IGR@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:IGR@tceq.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** Update 6: Fire / R10 / TPC Port Neches Operations / Port Neches, Jefferson County - Notification of Significant Incident/Notification Report to State Legislators

#### **Update 6:**

As December 4, 2019, the fire is currently extinguished. Firefighting water is being applied to keep equipment and debris cool, and to reduce fugitive emissions. The Joint Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is functioning and the used firefighting water is being pumped from the site at variable rates above 5,000 gallons per minute. TPC is recirculating as much firewater as possible to reduce the amount being sent to the Joint WWTP.

TCEQ teams and contractors continue to conduct air monitoring 24 hours/day throughout the area. On December 3, 2019, at approximately 8:19 p.m., CTEH (TPC Contractors) recorded an instantaneous reading of 50.0 ppm of 1,3-Butadiene within the facility fence line near the parking lots at the main gate of the facility. This is believed to be a direct result of spherical Tank 25 (containing Crude Butadiene Feedstock) that currently has a leaking relief valve (RV). Unified Command, including the County Judge, was notified and the strike team was deployed to the area. The strike team did not obtain any sustained action-level readings after the initial 50.0ppm 1,3-Butadiene reading. No elevated action-level readings were recorded within community areas. The leak was discovered via infrared drone overflights on December 3, 2019. To temporarily remedy the issue operations have directed water to be positioned to rain over Tank 25 to alleviate fugitive emissions. A plan is currently being developed to access and permanently seat the RV. It is currently unsafe to access Tank 25 via the attached stairway, per an engineering inspection conducted on December 4, 2019.

TPC now has personnel stationed at Outfall 201 to document and report overflow and sheening to Incident Command and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). As of 12:30 p.m. on December 4, 2019, wastewater was continuing to overflow Outfall 201. The overflow is due to additional firewater being used on Tank 25, and the application of water to keep equipment cool. TPC is working to stop the overflow by adding additional pumps. Pre-Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) evaluations were conducted today, December 4, 2019. Surface water sampling was conducted in nearby canals and the Neches River on December 1 and 2, 2019. Sampling for the Port Neches and Groves drinking water systems was conducted on December 4, 2019 by TCEQ Region 10 staff.

TPC contractors (CTEH) began conducting asbestos swipe sampling upon request by complainants. Asbestos complaints that the TCEQ receives will continue to be forwarded to TPC for further investigation. Asbestos debris removal will continue on December 5, 2019.

The Debris Removal and Waste Management Plans are being drafted.

The region continues to staff the Incident Command/Emergency Operation Center, provide air monitoring and water quality monitoring/assessment teams. Staff from TCEQ regional offices in Houston and Corpus Christi, as well as staff from the TCEQ's Critical Infrastructure Division's Disaster Response Strike Team members have been assisting with air monitoring, Incident Command staffing, and SCAT operations.

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**From:** Jonathan Walling <[jonathan.walling@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:jonathan.walling@tceq.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, December 3, 2019 7:49 PM

**To:** HSNotify <[HSNotify@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:HSNotify@tceq.texas.gov)>; IGR <[IGR@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:IGR@tceq.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** Update 5: Fire / R10 / TPC Port Neches Operations / Port Neches, Jefferson County - Notification of Significant Incident/Notification Report to State Legislators

#### **Update 5:**

There are currently no shelter-in-places or evacuations in effect. A designated safety zone has been established around the immediate incident area, including road blocks that restrict the public from entering restricted areas. Port Neches-Groves ISD classes resumed on December 3, 2019. Air monitoring has been increased in the areas surrounding nearby schools.

As of 11:00 a.m. on December 3, 2019, the fire was contained to approximately one visible spot fire. Firefighting water being used to fight the fire is being pumped from the LNVA Canal and the Neches River and is also being recycled, when possible, for firefighting needs. The Joint Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is functioning and the used firefighting water is being pumped from the site at variable rates above 5,000 gallons per minute. TPC is recirculating as much firewater as possible to reduce the amount being sent to the Joint WWTP.

Overnight, a separator pump utilized for firewater recycling failed. This resulted in more water being sent to the Joint WWTP. As a result, on December 3, 2019, at 11:44 a.m., wastewater began overflowing Outfall 201. TPC is working to stop the flow. Pre-Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) evaluations were conducted again today, December 3, 2019. Sheening has been noted in a wastewater canal adjacent to the facility. Plans for drinking water intake sampling is being coordinated for the Port Neches and Groves drinking water systems. The samples are being collected December 4, 2019.

TCEQ teams and contractors continue to conduct air monitoring 24 hours/day throughout the area. On December 2, 2019, contractors recorded the following 1,3-Butadiene readings within the restricted access work zone area: 5.0ppm (5:35 p.m.), 1.33ppm (8:55 p.m.), 0.66ppm (9:10 p.m.), and 0.69ppm (11:10 p.m.). On December 2, 2019, within the plant's fence line (North Plant area) a reading of 2.92ppm 1,3-Butadiene was recorded. On December 3, 2019, CTEH (TPC Contractors) recorded a reading of 1.2ppm of 1,3-Butadiene at approximately 8:20 a.m., with a maximum reading of 1.35ppm 1,3-Butadiene at Port Neches Middle School during that time. The County Judge was notified, and the strike team deployed to the area. No further readings above action level (0.5ppm for 1,3-Butadiene and 5.0ppm for VOCs) were recorded.

Asbestos monitoring and sampling began on November 27, 2019, and will continue in impacted areas. On December 1, 2019, TPC contractors (CTEH) began conducting asbestos swipe sampling upon request by complainants. Asbestos complaints that the TCEQ receives will continue to be forwarded to TPC for further investigation. Asbestos debris removal will continue on December 4, 2019.

The Debris Removal and Waste Management Plans are being drafted.

The region continues to staff the Incident Command/Emergency Operation Center, provide air monitoring and water quality monitoring/assessment teams. The DDC was stood down on November 29, 2019. Staff from TCEQ regional offices in Houston and Corpus Christi, as well as staff from TCEQ's Remediation Division and TCEQ's Critical Infrastructure Division's Disaster Response Strike Team members have been assisting with air monitoring, Incident Command staffing, and SCAT operations.

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**From:** Jonathan Walling

**Sent:** Monday, December 2, 2019 4:19 PM

**To:** HSNotify <[HSNotify@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:HSNotify@tceq.texas.gov)>; IGR <[IGR@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:IGR@tceq.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** Update 4: Fire / R10 / TPC Port Neches Operations / Port Neches, Jefferson County - Notification of Significant Incident/Notification Report to State Legislators

#### **Update 4:**

There are currently no shelter-in-places or evacuations in effect. A designated safety zone remains in place around the immediate fire area. Port Neches-Groves ISD classes were cancelled for December 2, 2019 and plans for classes to resume will be further evaluated December 2, 2019..

As of 1:00 p.m., December 2, 2019, the fire is contained to approximately one visible spot fire. Firefighting water is being pumped from the LNVA Canal and the Neches River and is also being recycled, when possible, for firefighting needs. The Joint Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is functioning and firefighting water is being pumped from the site at variable rates above 5,000 gallons per minute. On December 2, 2019, at approximately 08:55am, noises were heard nearby the plant. The noises were determined to be the settling of impacted equipment. The settling of this equipment did not result in additional explosions or other issues. No injuries were reported.

There was a subsequent breach at Outfall 201, but as of 1:00 p.m. on December 2, 2019, the breach had ceased. All water is now being treated at the WWTP prior to discharge.

Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) is planned to be conducted on December 3, 2019. Sheening has been noted in a wastewater canal adjacent to the facility. Water sampling related to a reported fish kill was conducted on December 1-2, 2019 by TCEQ.

TCEQ teams and contractors continue to conduct air monitoring 24 hours a day throughout the area. On December 1, 2019 at approximately 10:22 p.m., a measurement of 0.79 ppm 1,3-Butadiene was recorded at the intersection of 166/366 (restricted work zone area in Port Neches, TX). A measurement of PM2.5 (0.338 mg/m3) was also recorded. This is above action-level for the public of 0.132 mg/m3 and below action level for workers of 0.351 mg/m3. This was in a restricted work zone area and not in the community. This was caused due to hose placement while firefighting and was directly related to PM2.5 readings. Hoses were relocated for better vapor suppression, fire control and reestablished water flow/fire suppression, which minimized PM. The county judge was notified immediately and the strike team was deployed to confirm readings. No communities/public areas were impacted.

Asbestos debris removal continues today, December 2, 2019.

Plans including the Water Sampling Plan and the Environmental Sampling and Analysis Plan were approved December 1, 2019. The Debris Removal and Waste Management Plans are being drafted.

The region continues to staff the Incident Command/Emergency Operation Center, provide air monitoring and water quality monitoring/assessment teams. The DDC was stood down on November 29, 2019. Staff from TCEQ regional offices in Houston and Corpus Christi, as well as staff from TCEQ's Remediation Division and TCEQ's Critical Infrastructure Division's Disaster Response Strike Team members have been assisting with air monitoring, Incident Command staffing, and SCAT operations.

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**From:** Jonathan Walling <[jonathan.walling@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:jonathan.walling@tceq.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Sunday, December 1, 2019 3:48 PM

**To:** HSNotify <[HSNotify@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:HSNotify@tceq.texas.gov)>; IGR <[IGR@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:IGR@tceq.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** Update 3: Fire / R10 / TPC Port Neches Operations / Port Neches, Jefferson County - Notification of Significant Incident/Notification Report to State Legislators

### **Update 3:**

The 4-mile radius evacuation around TPC was lifted, as of 10:00 a.m. November 29, 2019. There are currently no shelter-in-places or evacuations in effect. A designated safety zone has been established around the immediate fire area. Port Neches-Groves ISD classes were cancelled for December 2, 2019 and plans for classes to resume will be further evaluated December 1-2, 2019.

At approximately 11:30 p.m. on November 30, 2019, a distillation column fell on-site. No injuries were reported. No shelter-in-places or evacuations resulted from the column falling, but the on-scene Incident Command Post was relocated as a result. Currently, the fire is contained to approximately five visible spot fires. Firefighting water is being pumped from the LNVA Canal and the Neches River and is also being recycled, when possible, for firefighting needs. The Joint Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is functioning and firefighting water is being pumped from the site at variable rates above 5,000 gallons per minute. The plan is to steadily increase the amount of firefighting water as soon as the request to permit more wastewater to the WWTP is approved. There is also a developing plan that will continue to recirculate more firefighting water within the TPC site.

Wastewater is no longer flowing over Outfall 201 as of November 30, 2019. All water is now being treated at the WWTP prior to discharge. Pre-Shoreline Cleanup Assessment Technique (SCAT) evaluations are being conducted today, with SCAT planned to be conducted on December 2, 2019. Sheening has been noted in a wastewater canal adjacent to the facility. Water sampling will be conducted on December 1, 2019 by TCEQ Investigators.

TCEQ teams and contractors continue to conduct air monitoring 24 hours/day throughout the area. On December 1, 2019, beginning at 12:49am, and sustaining throughout the morning, action-levels of 1,3-Butadiene were recorded at a maximum of 3.22 ppm at 12:49 a.m. by CTEH contractors (TPC) at the intersection of Hwy 366 and SH 166, Port Neches, TX (work area). The Strike Team was called in to confirm readings. NRC contractors (TCEQ) recorded a maximum reading of 0.52 ppm 1,3-Butadiene at 0.52 ppm from 2:12 a.m. to 2:25 a.m. in the same area (work area). The County Judge was notified of the 1,3-Butadiene readings at approximately 1:15am. Contractors (CTEH and NRC) continue to monitor the area. Readings above action levels have been documented throughout the morning at the intersection of Hwy 366/166, Port Neches, TX (within immediate work area) by CTEH and NRC contractors. No readings above action-levels of 1,3-Butadiene, PM, or VOCs have been detected outside of the immediate work area.

Asbestos monitoring and sampling began on November 27, 2019. The results from community asbestos air sampling from the first 48 hours have come back at non-detect levels. Asbestos monitoring will continue. Today, December 1, 2019, TPC contractors (CTEH) have asbestos swipe sampling capabilities ready and functional upon request by complainants. Asbestos complaints that the TCEQ receives will continue to be forwarded to TPC for further investigation. TPC contractors (CTEH) have coordinated with Port Neches-Groves ISD and will be working with them to conduct interior (all interior rooms) and exterior asbestos air monitoring prior to school resuming at the High School and Middle School. Asbestos debris removal continues today, December 1, 2019.

Plans including the Water Sampling Plan and the Environmental Sampling and Analysis Plan were approved December 1, 2019. The Debris Removal and Waste Management Plans are being drafted.

TCEQ staff continue to staff the Incident Command/Emergency Operation Center, provide air monitoring and water quality monitoring/assessment teams. The DDC was stood down on November 29, 2019. Houston, Corpus Christi, and



staff from TCEQ's Critical infrastructure Division's Disaster Response Strike Team members have been assisting with air monitoring, Incident Command staffing, and SCAT operations.

#### **Update 2:**

The 4-mile radius evacuation around TPC was lifted, as of 10:00 a.m. November 29, 2019. There are currently no shelter-in-places or evacuations in effect. A designated safety zone has been established around the immediate fire area.

Currently, the fire is contained to three spot fires in pressurized lines. Firefighting water is being pumped from the LNVA Canal and the Neches River for firefighting needs. The Joint Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is functioning and firefighting water is being pumped from the site at variable rates above 5,000 gallons per minute. The plan is to steadily increase the amount of firefighting water as soon as the request to permit more wastewater to the WWTP is approved. There is also a developing plan that will recirculate more firefighting water within the TPC site.

Breached Outfall 201 and impacted ditches from that breach continue to be monitored. 3000 feet of boom have been deployed. SCAT will begin on the impacted ditches December 1, 2019 (TPWD and GLO).

TCEQ teams and contractors continue to conduct air monitoring 24 hours a day throughout the area. On November 30, 2019 at approximately 0535 hrs, TPC contractors (CTEH) had a hit of 1.0 ppm of 1,3-Butadiene (action level 0.5 ppm of 1,3 butadiene) near the intersection of Main Street and Grigsby in Port Neches. The Strike Team was deployed to verify readings, but could not replicate it. Contractors continue to monitor the area and no action-level hits have been documented.

Asbestos monitoring and sampling began on November 27, 2019. The results from community asbestos air sampling from the first 48 hours have come back at non-detect levels. Asbestos monitoring will continue. On December 1, 2019, TPC contractors (CTEH) will have asbestos swipe sampling capabilities ready and functional upon request by complainants. Asbestos complaints that the TCEQ has received will be forwarded to TPC for further investigation.

The Site Safety Plan was approved November 28, 2019. The Air Monitoring Plan was approved November 29, 2019. The Water Sampling Plan should be approved today, November 30, 2019. The Waste Management Plan is being drafted.

The region continues to staff the Incident Command/Emergency Operation Center and provide air monitoring teams. The DDC was stood down on November 29, 2019. Houston and Corpus Christi Disaster Response Strike Team members have been assisted with air monitoring and Incident Command staffing.

#### **Update 1:**

The 4-mile radius evacuation around TPC has been lifted, as of 10:00 a.m. Friday, which affected approximately 45,000 people.

On Wednesday, November 27, 2019, several issues made containing and managing firefighting water problematic. Power was lost during one of the explosions, which meant that the Joint Wastewater Treatment Plant (Joint WWTP) shared between TPC and Huntsman, was offline and could not accept firefighting water. The water was being held onsite by earthen dams around the facility. Because the area was highly explosive, it was unsafe to bring in frac tanks to collect the water. Eventually, Outfall 201 was breached at 6:23 p.m. on November 27, 2019. Outfall 201 leads through several drainage ditches and eventually reaches the Neches River. Sheening and product has been documented in various ditches; however, it has not reached the Neches River. Booms and skimmers have been deployed, as well as extra manpower to remove sheening and product.

Currently, the fire is contained to eight spot fires in different units inside TPC. This reduction in fire has meant a reduction in firefighting water. The Joint WWTP power was restored late on November 28, 2019, and is pumping firefighting water from the site at a reduced rate of 5000 gallons per minute; the firefighting efforts are producing

approximately 20,000 gpm, so containing and managing firefighting water is still an issue, and water continues to escape through Outfall 201.

TCEQ teams, contractors, and the Civil Support Team continue to conduct air monitoring 24 hours a day throughout the area. No action levels have been exceeded.

The Site Safety Plan was approved November 28, 2019. The Air Monitoring Plan and Water Sampling Plan should be approved today, November 29, 2019. The Waste Management Plan is being drafted.

The region continues to staff the Incident Command/Emergency Operation Center, the Disaster District (DDC), and provide monitoring teams. Houston Disaster Response Strike Team members have been deployed to assist with air monitoring and Incident Command staffing.

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**From:** Sarah Kirksey <[Sarah.Kirksey@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:Sarah.Kirksey@tceq.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Saturday, November 30, 2019 1:16 PM

**To:** Jonathan Walling <[jonathan.walling@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:jonathan.walling@tceq.texas.gov)>; Cynthia Gandee <[Cynthia.Gandee@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:Cynthia.Gandee@tceq.texas.gov)>

**Cc:** Sarah Kirksey <[Sarah.Kirksey@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:Sarah.Kirksey@tceq.texas.gov)>; Kathy Saucedo <[Kathy.Saucedo@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:Kathy.Saucedo@tceq.texas.gov)>; Jillian Layton <[Jillian.Layton@Tceq.Texas.Gov](mailto:Jillian.Layton@Tceq.Texas.Gov)>; Hope Davila <[Hope.Davila@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:Hope.Davila@tceq.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** Update 2: Fire / R10 / TPC Port Neches Operations / Port Neches, Jefferson County - Notification of Significant Incident/Notification Report to State Legislators

Update 2:

The 4-mile radius evacuation around TPC was lifted, as of 10:00 a.m. November 29, 2019. There are currently no shelter-in-places or evacuations in effect. A designated safety zone has been established around the immediate fire area.

Currently, the fire is contained to three spot fires in pressurized lines. Firefighting water is being pumped from the LNVA Canal and the Neches River for firefighting needs. The Joint Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is functioning and firefighting water is being pumped from the site at variable rates above 5,000 gallons per minute. The plan is to steadily increase the amount of firefighting water as soon as the request to permit more wastewater to the WWTP is approved. There is also a developing plan that will recirculate more firefighting water within the TPC site.

Breached Outfall 201 and impacted ditches from that breach continue to be monitored. 3000 feet of boom have been deployed. SCAT will begin on the impacted ditches December 1, 2019 (TPWD and GLO).

TCEQ teams and contractors continue to conduct air monitoring 24 hours a day throughout the area. On November 30, 2019 at approximately 0535 hrs, TPC contractors (CTEH) had a hit of 1.0 ppm of 1,3-Butadiene (action level 0.5 ppm of 1,3 butadiene) near the intersection of Main Street and Grigsby in Port Neches. The Strike Team was deployed to verify readings, but could not replicate it. Contractors continue to monitor the area and no action-level hits have been documented.

Asbestos monitoring and sampling began on November 27, 2019. The results from community asbestos air sampling from the first 48 hours have come back at non-detect levels. Asbestos monitoring will continue. On December 1, 2019, TPC contractors (CTEH) will have asbestos swipe sampling capabilities ready and functional upon request by complainants. Asbestos complaints that the TCEQ has received will be forwarded to TPC for further investigation.

The Site Safety Plan was approved November 28, 2019. The Air Monitoring Plan was approved November 29, 2019. The Water Sampling Plan should be approved today, November 30, 2019. The Waste Management Plan is being drafted.

The region continues to staff the Incident Command/Emergency Operation Center and provide air monitoring teams. The DDC was stood down on November 29, 2019. Houston and Corpus Christi Disaster Response Strike Team members have been assisted with air monitoring and Incident Command staffing.

#### Update 1:

The 4-mile radius evacuation around TPC has been lifted, as of 10:00 a.m. Friday, which affected approximately 45,000 people.

On Wednesday, November 27, 2019, several issues made containing and managing firefighting water problematic. Power was lost during one of the explosions, which meant that the Joint Wastewater Treatment Plant (Joint WWTP) shared between TPC and Huntsman, was offline and could not accept firefighting water. The water was being held onsite by earthen dams around the facility. Because the area was highly explosive, it was unsafe to bring in frac tanks to collect the water. Eventually, Outfall 201 was breached at 6:23 p.m. on November 27, 2019. Outfall 201 leads through several drainage ditches and eventually reaches the Neches River. Sheening and product has been documented in various ditches; however, it has not reached the Neches River. Booms and skimmers have been deployed, as well as extra manpower to remove sheening and product.

Currently, the fire is contained to eight spot fires in different units inside TPC. This reduction in fire has meant a reduction in firefighting water. The Joint WWTP power was restored late on November 28, 2019, and is pumping firefighting water from the site at a reduced rate of 5000 gallons per minute; the firefighting efforts are producing approximately 20,000 gpm, so containing and managing firefighting water is still an issue, and water continues to escape through Outfall 201.

TCEQ teams, contractors, and the Civil Support Team continue to conduct air monitoring 24 hours a day throughout the area. No action levels have been exceeded.

The Site Safety Plan was approved November 28, 2019. The Air Monitoring Plan and Water Sampling Plan should be approved today, November 29, 2019. The Waste Management Plan is being drafted.

The region continues to staff the Incident Command/Emergency Operation Center, the Disaster District (DDC), and provide monitoring teams. Houston Disaster Response Strike Team members have been deployed to assist with air monitoring and Incident Command staffing.

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**From:** Kathy Saucedo <[Kathy.Saucedo@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:Kathy.Saucedo@tceq.texas.gov)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, November 27, 2019 4:30 AM

**To:** HSNotify <[HSNotify@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:HSNotify@tceq.texas.gov)>; IGR <[IGR@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:IGR@tceq.texas.gov)>

**Subject:** Initial:: Fire / R10 / TPC Port Neches Operations / Port Neches, Jefferson County - Notification of Significant Incident

**Notification Status:** Initial

#### General Incident Information

**Type of Incident:** Fire / Explosion

**Date:** November 27, 2019

**Time Incident Started:** 1:00 a.m.

**Time TCEQ Notified:** The Beaumont Region was made aware (staff woke up from explosion) of an explosion and subsequent fire located in the Port Neches area (Jefferson County) at the TPC Port Neches Operations.

**TCEQ Region:** Region 10 – Beaumont

#### Responsible Party (RP)/Regulated Entity Information/Incident Location

**RP/Regulated Entity Name:** TPC Port Neches Operations

**RN Number (if available):** RN104964267

**Street Address:** Located at the NW Corner of the Intersection of FM366 and Spur 136

**City:** Port Neches

**County:** Jefferson County

**RP Contact Name and Information:** Mr. Mike Miller, PNO Production Manager, (409) 724-4917

Specific Incident Information

**Description of Event/Cause:** There was an explosion / fire at TPC Port Neches Operations located in Port Neches, Jefferson County. The cause is unknown. This facility manufactures 1-3 Butadiene and Raffinate. Multiple fire departments are responding to the active fire. Mr. Mike White, Jefferson County EMC, stated that they are in the process of calling for a ½ mile radius evacuation from the facility. In addition, a shelter-in-place has been issued by the Orange County Judge for citizens south of I-10 in Orange County. No additional information is known at this time.

**Material Released:** 1-3 Butadiene and other unknowns

**Amount Released (estimated):** Unknown

**Affected Media:** Air/Land/Stormwater

**Injuries or Fatalities:** Mr. White, Jefferson County EMC, stated that there were injuries; however, he did not know how many or the extent of the injuries at this time.

**Other Risks:** There have been reports that the fire is very close to the pressurized tanks that are located at the site.

Current Response

**TCEQ Response:** The Beaumont office is calling staff to the office to calibrate air monitoring equipment and prepare to go into the neighborhoods to conduct air monitoring once a safe perimeter is established. Hope Davila, Beaumont Emergency Response Coordinator, is at the incident command.

**TCEQ Responder Name and Contact Information:** Hope Davila, 409-791-7296

**Incident Commander Name and Contact Information:** Unknown

**Emergency Response Contractor Information:** Williams Fire has been contracted by the RE

**Other Federal, State, or Local Authorities on Site:** EPA Contractor is enroute, The National Weather Service in Lake Charles, Louisiana is assisting with plume modeling, and Texas Department of Public Safety

Other Pertinent Information, If Available

**Weather:** Fair 76 degrees Fahrenheit

**Wind Direction:** Calm

**Potentially Impacted Receptors:** Downwind neighborhoods and other Petrochemical Facilities

**Local News Media:** Local news stories can be found at the following links:

<https://www.12newsnow.com/article/news/local/explosion-fire-burning-at-port-neches-plant-early-monday/502-de236827-a796-48f7-ac55-fad5064c3c8b>

[https://www.facebook.com/KFDMNews/videos/breaking-tpc-plant-explosion-in-port-neches/1813119148831422/?so=discover&rv=top\\_live](https://www.facebook.com/KFDMNews/videos/breaking-tpc-plant-explosion-in-port-neches/1813119148831422/?so=discover&rv=top_live)

<https://www.cnn.com/2019/11/27/us/port-neches-plant-explosion/index.html>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/27/us/texas-explosion-port-neches-tpc.html>

